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September 29, 2003

RECEIVED & INSPECTED

SEP 30 2003

FCC - MAILROOM

VIA FACSIMILE & FEDERAL EXPRESS

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: CC Docket No. 96-45, Certification Pursuant to 47 C.F.R. §54.314

Dear Secretary Dortch:

Pursuant to the requirements of 47 C.F.R. §54.314, the Public Service Commission of Maryland ("Maryland PSC") hereby certifies to the Federal Communications Commission ("Commission") that all federal high-cost support provided to Armstrong Telephone Company of Maryland ("Armstrong") for the period commencing January 1, 2004 and ending December 31, 2004, will be utilized in a manner consistent with §254(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. As required by §254(e), Armstrong will utilize the Federal high-cost support for the provision, maintenance and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended.

The Commission has reviewed Armstrong's request for certification and is satisfied that all federal Universal Service high cost support funds flowing to the Company, a rural local exchange carrier, will continue to be utilized solely for the purposes intended under §254(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. A copy of Armstrong's affidavit in support of its request is attached.

[Handwritten signature]

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The Maryland PSC thanks the Commission for its cooperation in this very important matter. Please date stamp the extra copy of this filing and return it to the Maryland PSC in the enclosed, stamped, self-addressed envelope.

By Direction of the Commission,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Felecia L. Greer", written over a horizontal line.

Felecia L. Greer
Executive Secretary

FLG:nrm
Attachment

cc: James D. Mitchell, President Armstrong Telephone Company of Maryland
Michael L. Swindler, Esquire, Thomas, Thomas, Armstrong & Niesen

Ms. Irene Flannery
Universal Service Administrative Company
2120 L Street, NW, Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20037

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA :
:
: ss
COUNTY OF BUTLER :

AFFIDAVIT

Pursuant to the requirements of 47 C.F.R. §54.314, Armstrong Telephone Company of Maryland ("Armstrong" or "Company") hereby certifies that all federal Universal Service high cost support funds flowing to the Company, a rural local exchange carrier, will only be utilized in the year 2004 for the purposes intended under Section 254(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 ("Act").

Specifically, Armstrong certifies that it will utilize its universal service support, in the amounts shown by USAC on its website at www.universalservice.org/hc/reports for the Company, for the provision, maintenance, and/or upgrading of facilities and service for which the support is intended.

In support of this certification, Armstrong represents the following:

- (1) Armstrong provided the supported services required by U.S.C. § 214(e);
- (2) Armstrong advertised the availability of supported services and the charges for them as required by U.S.C. § 214 (e); and
- (3) Funds received by Armstrong from the federal high-cost universal service support fund will be used only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of the facilities and services for which the support is intended.

Based upon the information provided in one or more of the above three categories, Armstrong certifies that it utilizes its federal universal service support for the purposes intended under Section 254(e) of the Act.

By James D. Mitchell
James D. Mitchell
President

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 28th day of August, 2003.

Notary Public

Kelly D. Chapman

My Commission Expires:

Notarial Seal
Kelly D. Chapman, Notary Public
Butler Twp., Butler County
My Commission Expires July 30, 2008